



Georgia's Pre-K Updates

February 23, 2023



**Georgia Dept
of Early Care
and Learning**
BRIGHT FROM THE START

Agenda

- Teacher Credential Information
- Proposed FY24 Budget
- Pre-K Enrollment Data
- Class Size Reduction Pilot
- Pre-K Application



Requests for Teacher Credential Waivers

- Beginning in March, you will be able to submit waiver requests in PANDA.
 - Once the form is available in PANDA, the paper form will no longer be accepted.
- Requests for an extension of a current approved waiver should be submitted in PANDA once the new process is available.
- Additional information including instructions for submitting waiver requests in PANDA will be provided soon.



CDA with CLASS Program



- DECAL, in partnership with Teachstone, is offering the CDA CLASS Facilitated program at **no cost** to participants.
 - Program is available for Georgia's Pre-K lead teachers and assistant teachers who are approved for a waiver in the 2022-2023 school year.
- CDA with CLASS provides teachers with guidance and support to complete their required coursework and portfolio requirements, while learning ways to improve teacher-student interactions.
- Once participants finish the Teachstone training, they will be able to apply for DECAL Scholars to cover the observation/assessment fee. The CDA is completely free for those that meet the DECAL Scholars eligibility criteria.
- **Teachers should contact proflearning@decalscholars.org for registration information.**



Pre-K Program

State Lottery Funds Change			
FY 2023	FY 2024	Increase	% Change
\$400,900,881	\$435,610,158	\$34,709,277	8.66%

Proposed

- Increase formula funds for classroom operations and redirect existing funding to Pre-K lead teacher salaries= \$14,035,636
- Increase funds to adjust the state base salary schedule to increase salaries for certified Pre-K teachers and assistant teachers by \$2,000 = \$20,647,514
- Reduce formula funds for training and experience for Pre-K teachers= \$(178,981)
- Increase funds to provide a \$2,000 cost-of-living adjustment for all full-time, benefit-eligible state employees effective July 1, 2023, to address agency recruitment and retention needs = \$202,326

Governor's Recommendation FY 2024



Potential Budget Impact

Teachers:

- ALL Teachers: Increase in base salary of **\$2,000** for lead and assistant teachers
- Lead Teachers: Require 100% of base salary to be paid for lead teacher position

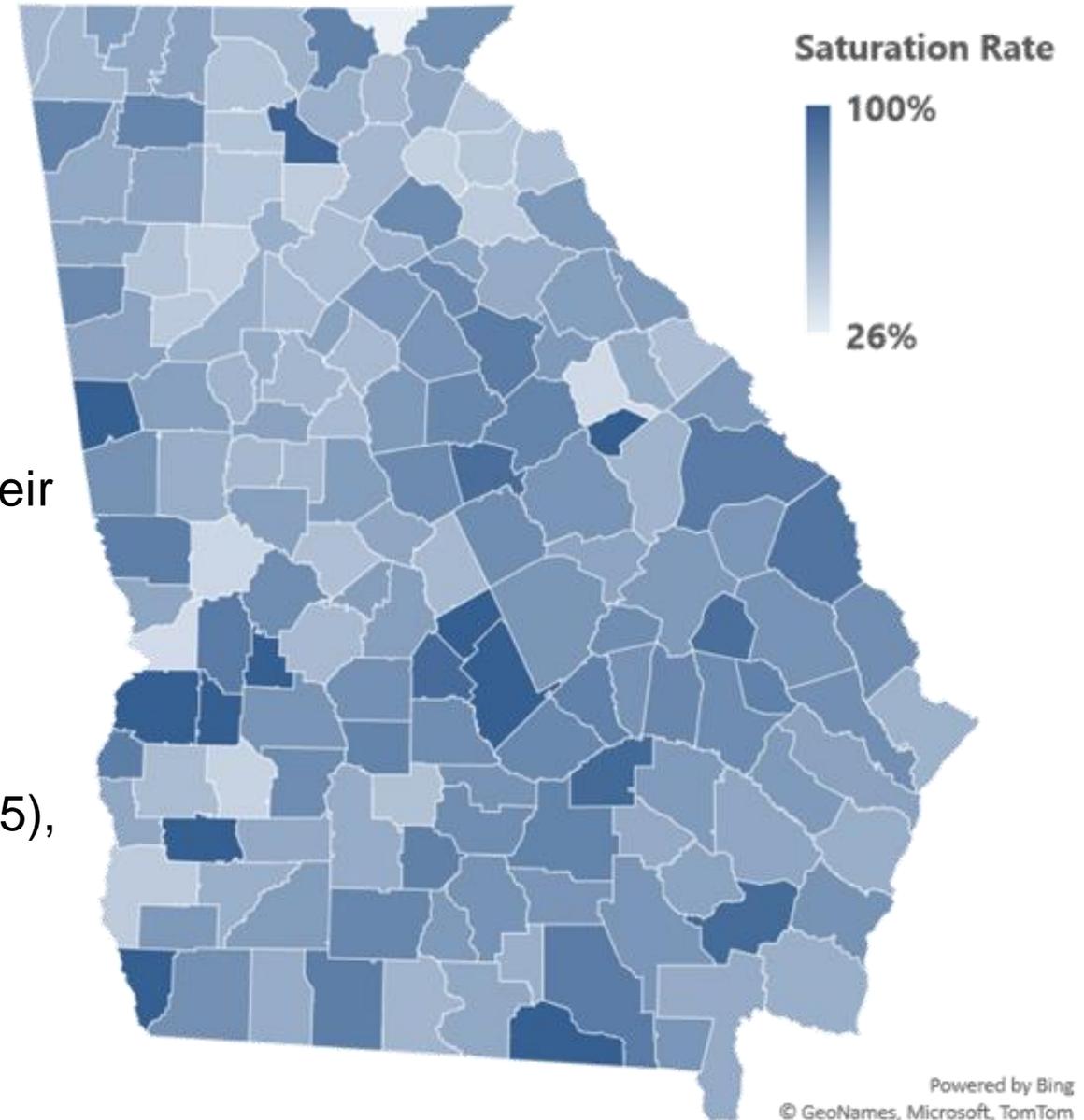
Operating Funds:

- Classroom: Increase of **\$3676.16** per class
- Benefits: Increase due to the additional \$2,000 in salary; amount varies based on program type and credential level
 - Public School Certified Lead
 - $39.96\% \times 2,000 = \mathbf{\$799.20}$
 - All other credential levels for Leads and Assistants (public and private)
 - $23.76\% \times 2,000 = \mathbf{\$475.20}$

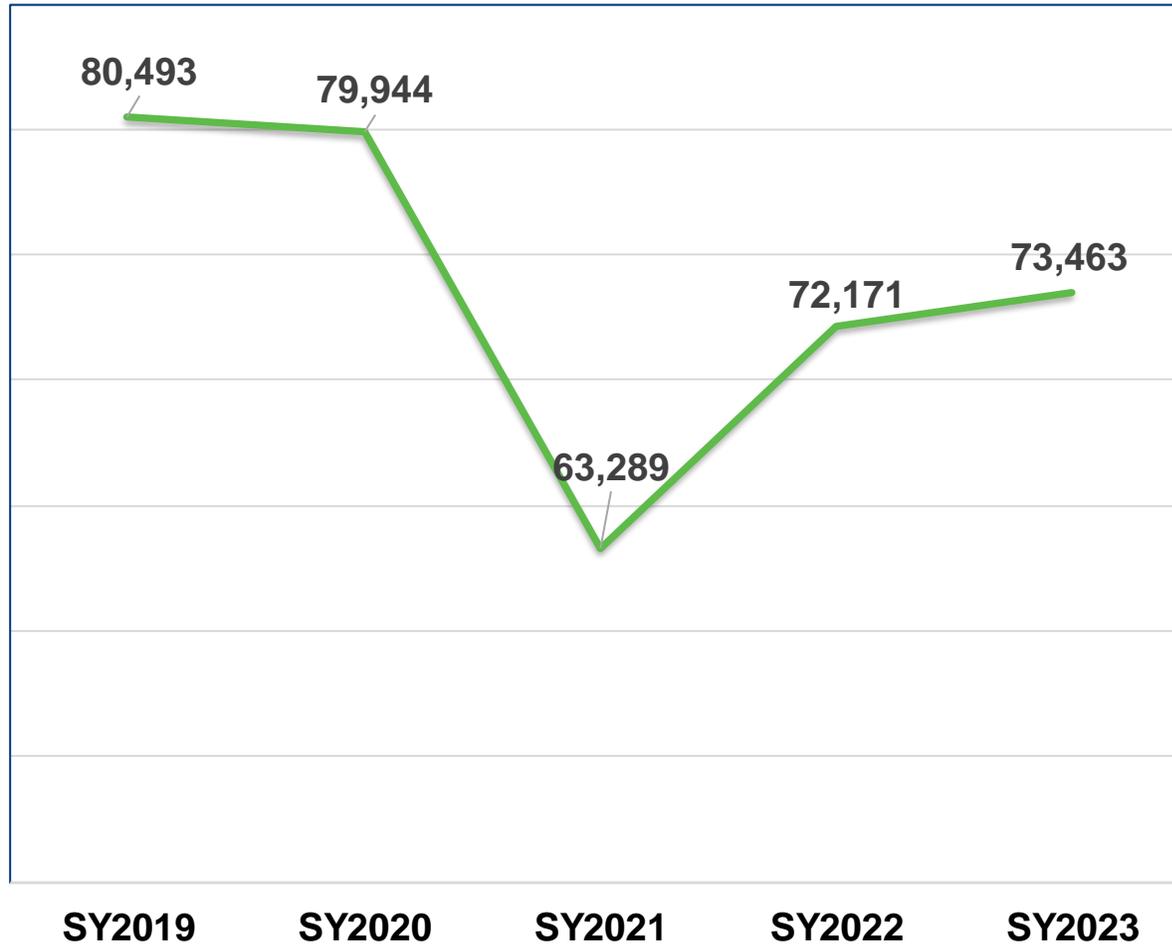




- Current Enrollment: 73,462
 - Estimated 54% of 4-year-olds.
 - 38% (60) counties serve 70% or more of their 4-year-olds
 - 18% (29) of counties serve less than 50% of their 4-year-olds
- Current Waiting List: 2,718
 - Counties with the highest waiting list: Fulton (378), Henry (178), Gwinnett (116), Fayette (115), Bibb (101), and Carroll (107)



Slight Increase in Pre-K Enrollment for SY2023



% of Four-Year-Old Population Served:

SY2019:	60%
SY2020:	60%
SY2021:	46%
SY2022:	53%
SY2023:	54%



Why is Enrollment Decreasing?

- **Following national and state trends for enrollment**
 - Birth rate: 16% fewer births in 2018 than Georgia's peak in 2007
 - Kindergarten enrollment down 2.5%
- **Impact of the pandemic**
 - Family choices for preschool children
 - Family mobility
 - Population shifts within the state



Why is There Still a Waiting List with Low Enrollment?

- **Open slots are not aligned with waiting list demand**
- **No capacity in areas of need**
- **Parent choice/need**
 - Program type
 - Location
 - Transportation
 - Before and after care



Class Size Impact

- **Classes with significantly lower class size over multiple years**
- **Need to close classes with lower enrollment to stabilize enrollment in communities**
- **Due to the low enrollment in Pre-K, we will be able to pilot reducing class size to 20 students.**
 - Next school year, we will be able to serve the current number of students AND any projected increase of students.



Class Closures

- **Considerations for closure:**
 - Low enrollment over multiple years
 - Uncredentialed / Instability in lead teachers
 - Outstanding balances due
- **Programs will be notified prior to submitting their application.**
 - Notification of class closure
 - Notification of monitoring class enrollment and potential closure
- **Grant agreements will include any changes in the number of classrooms awarded.**



Class Size Reduction Pilot

- **In 2011, Georgia's Pre-K class size was increased from 20 to 22 as part of the HOPE budget reforms.**
 - The current class size of 22 students is above the recommended Pre-K class size of 18-20 students.
 - Reducing class size is the 2nd highest priority for Pre-K teachers and providers (after salary).
 - The reduction of class size will allow teachers to provide more individualized instruction.
- **Programs can serve up to 22 students based on student registration and need in the area.**
 - Funding will be the same for 20 – 22 students.
 - Roster data will determine if a per child proration under 20 students will be applied.
 - August and September payments will be based on full enrollment (20-22 students).
 - Based on implementation of pilot, programs should anticipate a class size of 20 for the following school year (SY2024 - 2025).



Determining Class Size

- **It is a program decision next school year.**
- **You should make the best decision for your program and your families.**
- **For example:**
 - If your current registration is 20 or less, then you should plan to enroll up to 20 students.
 - If you have one class with 22 students enrolled for next year, you should plan to serve all students. Your class size could reduce to 21 or 20 *because of student withdrawals*.
 - If you have multiple classes, you should distribute students across classrooms to stabilize class size at 20 (or close to 20).
 - If you have multiple classes, you may choose to apply for an expansion class(es) to reduce class size to 20 due to current registration numbers.
- **You should only apply for an expansion if you have the number of students to support class size close to 20. Students could be registered or on a verified wait list.**



Pre-K Application

- **Pre-K Program Application will open on Tuesday, March 7th and close on Thursday, March 30th.**
- **Funding priorities:**
 - Reducing class size to 20 while continuing to serve the current number of students
 - Expansion in areas with waiting list
- **Programs will be able to “opt into” the pilot as part of the application process.**
 - May request expansion classrooms based on reduced class size
- **Decisions will be made as part of the Pre-K Grant application review process.**
- **The grants will be awarded in May.**



Questions?
Please email prek@dec.al.ga.gov



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Thank You!

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